

Newstead and Rural Families Children's Centre

The Tin Hat Centre, Chapel Road, Selston, Nottinghamshire, NG16 6BW

Inspection date 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
Access to services by young children and families		Good	2
The quality of practice and services		Good	2
The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for children and families

This children's centre group is good.

- Registration and participation rates have significantly improved due to a range of successful approaches, including strong partnership with a wide range of professionals, and better collation and use of data.
- Families benefit from a wide range of effective universal and targeted services. This includes also packages of tailored support in homes for those families experiencing personal difficulties.
- Families' outcomes are improving. Children benefit from activities preparing them for school. Adults gain in confidence, make new friends, and are gaining good opportunities to extend their learning, improve employability and parenting skills.
- The centre is led and managed well. Outcomes have improved due to robust monitoring of services, and effective support and challenge provided by the local authority and advisory board.
- The effective use of resources, and a variety of venues across the locality, has enabled families to access appropriate services and improve their well-being.
- There is strong involvement of parents in the centre's decision making through formal consultations, and active representation on the advisory board. A well-managed and excellent volunteer programme resulted in paid and unpaid employment for several adults.
- Staff and managers are driven to reduce inequalities, working with those families that need specialist support and celebrating diversity.

It is not outstanding because:

- A small minority of families living in remote rural communities remains difficult to engage, and are not benefiting from the good services offered by the centre.
- Although the majority of children are making good progress in their development, the gap is not closing quickly enough between the lowest 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the rest.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of this children's centre group was carried out under Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. The centres that form part of this children's centre group are Newstead Children's Centre and Rural Families Children's Centre.

This inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors held meetings with: local authority managers; representatives from the advisory board; parents; volunteers; a community midwife; childminders; a headteacher; an early years teacher; Jobcentre Plus managers; leaders of parenting and freedom district programmes; as well as centre staff and a number of other partners.

The inspectors visited a range of sessions and activities held at each of the two centres as well as in other venues. These included Acacia Community Centre, Hucknall Children's Centre, Selston Community Centre and Newstead Welfare Centre.

Activities observed included: 'Messy Play', 'Messy Explorers', 'Baby Massage', 'Sewing', 'Crèche', 'Kirkby Woodhouse Toddler Group' and a 'Childminder's Group'.

Inspectors looked at the group's self-evaluation documents, activity plans, case files, safeguarding procedures and a wide range of other relevant documentation.

Inspection team

Qaisra Shahraz, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Deborah Sanders	Additional Inspector
Maureen Deary	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about the group

Newstead and Rural Families Children's Centre is a group of two centres in the Ashfield district in western Nottinghamshire. It serves the wards of Newstead, Kirkby Woodhouse, Kirkby Annesley, Selston, Jacksdale, and Underwood which cover a large, and mainly rural, geographical area. There are nine other children's centres in the district. Commissioned by the local authority, the centre is managed by Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership (NCFP). A district manager, with the support of a coordinator is responsible for the group. The two centres share a local advisory group (LAG) comprising key partners and parents.

The centre works in partnership with a wide range of organisations to meet its core purpose by providing a range of universal and targeted services, including play and learning activities, family support services, adult education and health promotion activities. There is no on-site childcare provision.

There are 1077 children under five years of age living in the area. Around 16% of families living in the locality are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the main groups being mixed British, Eastern European and African/Caribbean. About 22% of families are workless and dependent on benefits. There are pockets of deprivation, for example, in Newstead village and Jacksdale ward. In Hucknall and Kirkby wards families live in the 30% lowest of deprivation. The centre's main target groups are children from isolated families, low-income families and those with disabilities.

Children's skills, knowledge and abilities on entry to early years provision are at or below those typical for their age. The priorities for the group are tackling rural isolation, workless households, supporting sufferers of domestic abuse and children with additional needs or disabilities. Housing is mainly owner occupied, as well social housing and private rented.

What does the group need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of families engaging with the centre from the identified target groups, particularly those experiencing isolation by living in remote rural communities by:
 - exploring innovative ways to reach more families
 - marketing and promoting the centre's services across the reach areas
 - planning more outreach activities.

- Demonstrate that outcomes are improving for children by:
 - working with the local authority, and with partners in schools and local nurseries, to identify actions that will narrow the gap between the lowest 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the rest.

Inspection judgements

Access to services by young children and families

Good

- Currently, over 83% of children under five years of age and expectant parents are registered with the centre, and the majority are involved with the centre's services. However, managers recognise that, while they have increased the number of families engaging with the centre from some target groups, the centre has not been successful in engaging a small minority of families living in remote rural communities.
- Strong partnerships, underpinned by good communication with local schools and health and social care professionals, have a very positive impact on children's learning and families' welfare, and on reducing inequalities. Good use of live birth data and effective sharing of information with the midwifery team, for example, have resulted in increased registrations.
- A large majority of families benefit from a wide range of good-quality, universal and targeted services, which considerably improve their outcomes and personal circumstances. These are based on a thorough assessment of the needs of individual families and of children who have additional needs.
- Opportunities for parents who are eligible to receive funding for their two-year-old children to attend early education have increased, and the majority of those children take up free places. Similarly, the vast majority of children aged three and four take up their free entitlement to early education.
- Through the effective use of a variety of community venues, including other local children's centres, the centre has successfully increased its outreach services. Home visits are an integral part of its outreach work.
- The centre places strong emphasis on providing services for the development of users' social, emotional, and personal skills. Proactive family support workers have good knowledge of the varied and difficult issues facing many families. They target support and advice effectively to meet the needs of individual families, particularly those suffering from postnatal depression, isolation or domestic violence, resulting in a reduction of inequalities for families.
- Satisfaction rates are very high. Parents, including those experiencing personal difficulties as a result of being new arrivals in the country, speak highly of how the centre has improved their lives. One grateful Eastern European woman spoke highly about the invaluable support she received from staff, which enabled her family to integrate well into life in Britain: 'They are fantastic people, and helped me a lot. They were there for me at the most difficult time in my life.'

The quality of practice and services

Good

- Families regard the children's centre, known locally as The Tin Hat Centre, as a valued hub of their community. They speak very warmly of the welcoming, helpful and sensitive staff who provide a high level of support, advice, and guidance.
- The centre is improving children's life chances through specialist sessions, such as 'Hometalk', which have a clear focus on children's speech and language development. Children enjoy and benefit from well-planned activities, such as 'Musical Tales', and 'Messy Explorers'. The proportion of children living in the area who achieved a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has shown improvement over time. In partnership with local nurseries, the centre is working hard to improve children's preparation for and success at school. However, the gap in attainment between the lowest achieving 20% and the rest still remains wide.
- The large majority of parents have engaged in parenting courses and some form of adult learning. This includes short taster courses such as 'First Aid', 'Sewing', 'Beauty', and 'Vintage Interiors'. The

'Dad's Baby Massage' sessions demonstrate well the centre's commitment to inclusivity and its involvement with fathers. Parents also have opportunities to gain accreditation in English and mathematics through effective partnerships with Access Training. They can also practise for job interviews, and write curriculum vitae in 'Work Clubs' at Acacia Centre to improve their employability skills. Some families who have difficulty in accessing the centre's services are supported by a free taxi service and a crèche place for their child.

- Health outcomes are good. Improving childhood obesity levels, which are significantly below the national rates, very high immunisation rates, and sustained breastfeeding reflect the centre's effective targeted work and support. Messages about healthy lifestyles and the importance of physical exercise, for example, are promoted well through health-themed events, 'Little Eaters', and swimming sessions for families held at Annesley Primary School.
- A key strength of the centre is its high level of engagement of parents who successfully influence the centre's decision making by becoming very active and confident members on the local advisory group. An excellent and well-managed volunteer programme at the centre has enabled several parents to benefit from volunteering opportunities. This has helped to build their confidence and progress into training and eventual employment.
- Disabled children and their parents are supported well through clear signposting to specialist support groups. The outreach work in several toddler groups meet the needs of families living in remote rural areas of Ashfield and Selston.

The effectiveness of leadership, governance and management

Good

- Managers are supported well and challenged to continually improve by the local authority and the advisory board. The local authority works closely with Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership (NCFP) who manage the group, to set ambitious targets for the centre. Robust analysis of data and information available to the centre, including through new systems of recording data show that services are having a positive impact on families and are consistently used in action planning.
- The strong, highly qualified, and experienced leadership and staff team are extremely effective and efficient. Leaders ensure that good use is made of the diverse skills of the staff by allocating them specialist lead roles, including for community development and inclusion. All staff benefit from a wide-ranging programme of appropriate professional development opportunities. The effective use of high-quality children's resources, accommodation and staff demonstrates good value for money and resulting in good outcomes for families.
- The quality-assurance arrangements are robust and demonstrate well the centre's clear focus on maintaining and monitoring of high quality services. The group's quality monitoring cycle includes quarterly performance reviews, quality improvement visits, locality meetings, session observations, supervision, and monitoring of development plans.
- The practice of gaining families' views more formally, such as through consultations, representation on the advisory board, and the use of parents as volunteers, are now well embedded and key strengths of the centre. As a result, self-evaluation processes are effective, and centre leaders accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Safeguarding, including e-safety, is a high priority within the centre, and its policies, procedures, and displays reflect this strong focus. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is used very effectively by family support staff to assess need and coordinate support for families, including those at risk of harm, children subject to child protection plans, and children in care.
- Inclusivity and a strong commitment to reducing barriers for families underpin all the centre's

activities. Similarly, the centre celebrates diversity through its displays of positive images of children from around the world and its choices of toys and bilingual books. Some parents new to the country benefit from the bilingual skills of two volunteers. The centre website with access to links to 28 languages, help the centre to increase online registrations, improve communication, and engage with its diverse minority ethnic local communities.

- Family case files are maintained to a high standard by staff. They are securely audited by managers to ensure that children and families are appropriately protected. The records clearly show positive improvements in mental health, economic stability and the safety of families.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Practice consistently reflects the highest aspirations for children and their families and as a result inequalities are reducing rapidly and gaps are closing.
Grade 2	Good	Practice enables most children and their families to access good quality services that improve children's wellbeing and achieve the stated outcomes for families.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	Performance is not as good as it might reasonably be expected to be in one or more key areas.
Grade 4	Inadequate	The needs of children and families in its area are not being met and/or the leaders and managers are not providing sufficient challenge to bring about improvement to the quality of services.

Children's Centre Group details

Unique reference number	80669
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	442836
Managed by	The local authority
Approximate number of children under five in the reach area	1077
Group manager	Rosemary Phillipson
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01623 673860
Email address	Rosemary.phillipson@nottshc.nhs.uk

This group consists of the following children's centres:

- URN 22584 – Rural Families Children's Centre
- URN 22130 – Newstead Children's Centre

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

(Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk